woman died and 67 persons were affected by leakage of chlorine gas on 20-6-87. Out of these, 56 persons were sent back after first aid and six persons were discharged from the hospital the same evening. The remaining persons were discharged from the hospital on 21-6-87. A Court of Inquiry has been instituted to go into this incident. In the meantime, to avoid such incidents in future, a Standard Operative Procedure has been formulated and conveyed to all formations for their guidance.

New approach to Himalayas' Defence Policy

2080. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the question of a new integrated approach to the Himalayas' defence policy to defend country's security, in view of the changing military situation in the Himalayas since the eighties, increasing defence collaboration between Pakistan and China, extending it to the nuclear field and increased threats to country's security on the Indo-China border; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) The country's defence plans take into account the security environment and the emerging threat.

In the interest of security it would not be desirable to disclose details.

Loss of revenue due to delay in disposal of seized goods by customs authorities

2081. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what on an average is the estimated annual loss of revenue suffered by the Government because of delay in the disposal of goods seized/confiscated by the customs authorities; and

(b) whether Government have reviewed the existing procedure/mode of disposal of the seized/confiscated goods by the customs authorities particularly in the case of goods which are prone to rapid decay to avoid or to minimise the losses, if so, what steps are contemplated by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) The average annual loss suffered due to theft, damage and deterioration etc. for the last three financial years was about Rs. 28 lakhs as against the total stock of seized goods of Rs. 260 crores as on 1-4-1986.

(b) The confiscated goods become ripe for disposal after completion of appeal, revision proceedings etc. . The procedure and mode of disposal of seized/confiscated goods have been reviewed from time to time and instructions have been issued for expediting the disposal of seized/confiscated goods Modes/channels of disposal were increased in 1985. In 1984, goods were divided into four categories to expedite disposal of goods susceptible to deterioration or rapid obsolescence. In 1985, section 110 of the Customs Act, 1962, relating to seizures was amended to enable immediate disposal of seized goods specified by the Government by notification by filing an application before a magistrate.

Investment schemes for NRI

2082. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated annual remittance by the common rural and semi-urban NRIs like Masons, Carpenters Electricians, Nurses etc.

(b) what are the channels, if any, provided by the Government for viable investments of their foreign exchange earnings on their return to the country to settle down in their villages/home towns; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above is in the negative, whether Government have